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Message Text

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R 131410Z DEC 74
FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4078
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL DOUALA

UNCLAS YAOUNDE 4078

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ECIN, CM, CD, CF, GB
SUBJ: UDEAC TENTH ANNIVERSARY

REF: YAOUNDE 4007 NOTAL

1. SUMMARY: UDEAC FINANCE AND ECONOMIC MINISTERS, REPRESENTING CAMEROON, GABON, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC AND CONGO MET IN YAOUNDE DEC 2-3 TO PREPARE FOR CHIEFS OF STATE SUMMIT DEC 6-7. OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE FOLLOWING HEADS OF STATE MEETING LISTED WITHOUT EXPLANATORY DETAIL THE MANY DECISIONS TAKEN AND SUBJECTS EXAMINED. DAYLONG CEREMONIAL EVENTS MARKED UDEACS 10TH ANNIVERSARY DEC 8, WITH KEYNOTE SPEECH BY OUTGOING UDEAC PRESIDENT AHIDJO. MAIN THEME AT THIS 10TH BIRTHDAY STOCK-TAKING AND DURING PRELIMINARY BUILDUP WAS THAT UDEAC HAS ACHIEVED EXEMPLARY SUCCESS DURING FIRST DECADE AS CUSTOMS UNION AND GOAL FOR COMING DECADE IS TO REALIZE AIM OF BECOMING TRUE ECONOMIC UNION THROUGH REGIONAL INDUSTRIALIZATION.

2. FOLLOWING MEETING OF EXPERTS IN NOVEMBER AND MINISTERIAL
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STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING DECEMBER 2 AND 3, UDEAC HEADS OF

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STATE GATHERED DEC 6 AND 7 TO HEAR PROGRESS REPORTS AND MAKE DECISIONS. LENGTHY FINAL COMMUNIQUE RELEASED DEC 7 LISTED AS ACTS ADOPTED AND DECISIONS TAKEN BY COUNCIL OF CHIEFS OF STATE: (A) REVISION OF UDEAC TREATY OF DECEMBER 8, 1964., (B) SETTING UP GENERAL ACCOUNTING SYSTEM (C) ALIGNMENT OF FEEDER ROADS LINKING TWO MEMBER STATES TO TRANS-AFRICAN HIGHWAY., (D) ORGANIZATION OF UDEAC FAIR IN 1976 AT BRAZZAVILLE., (E) APPROVAL OF 1975 UDEAC BUDGET., (F) ESTABLISHMENT OF UDEAC EMBLEM AND HYMN., (G) CREATION OF STATISTICAL ENGINEER TRAINING SERVICE IN YAOUNDE. (H) CONSTRUCTION OF RADIO MONITORING STATION IN LIBREVILLE., (I) CREATION OF RURAL ECONOMY DEPARTMENT WITHIN UDEAC SECRETARIAT., (J) APPROVAL OF 1973 FINANCIAL REPORT., (K) CREATION OF NATIONAL CARD CATALOGUE SYSTEM FOR INFO ON VILLAGES., (I) TRAINING SEMINAR FOR CENSUS OFFICIALS., (M) REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL CENSUS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF SYSTEM FOR COMPILING STATISTICS ON MODERN SECTOR ENTERPRISES., (N) ACTION PLAN FOR 1975 DEMOGRAPHIC STUDIES IN UDEAC STATES AND CHAD.

3. COMMUNIQUE ALSO STATED THAT COUNCIL EXAMINED PROGRESS MADE ON (A) SETTING UP SUBREGIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR DEVELOPMENT FINANCING IN BRAZZAVILLE, (B) STATUS OF MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES AND (C) GENERAL PLAN FOR INDUSTRIALIZATION. COUNCIL INSTRUCTED SECRETARIAT TO CONVENE FULL COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRIALIZATION TO FINISH ITS REPORT.

4. IN ADDITION COUNCIL RECOMMENDED THAT SECRETARIAT STUDY: (A) CREATION OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL RESEARCH COORDINATING COMMITTEE., (B) TOURISTIC POSSIBILITIES IN UDEAC., (C) REGIONAL SURVEY OF HOUSEHOLD BUDGETS., (D) BANK AND INSURANCE ACCOUNTING PLANS. CAR PRESIDENT BOKASSA NAMED UDEAC PRESIDENT FOR 1975.

5. PRESIDENT AHIDJO, IN SPEECH MARKING TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION DECEMBER 8, SAID REGIONAL COOPERATION BODIES LIKE UDEAC WERE ESSENTIAL BASIS OF AFRICAN UNITY, CREATING "CONCENTRIC CIRCLES OF SOLIDARITY" WHICH CAN EXPAND INTO CONTINENT WIDE SOLIDARITY. AMONG ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PAST HAVE BEEN (A) APPLICATION OF COMMON CUSTOMS LAWS AND REGULATIONS (B) TARIFF MEASURES TO PROTECT MEMBER STATES ECONOMIES, (C) IMPORT TAX REDUCTIONS -- PARTICULARLY THOSE OF JANUARY 1970-- BENEFITING CONSUMERS, (D) SINGLE TAX SYSTEM WHICH ALLOWED INDIRECT TAXA-
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TION ON LOCAL INDUSTRIES WITH REVENUES PASSED ON TO CONSUMER COUNTRIES. OBJECTIVE OF SETTING UP CUSTOMS UNION THUS SUCCESSFULLY ATTAINED.

6. CONTINUING EFFORTS, AHIDJO EMPHASIZED, ARE STILL NEEDED TO HARMONIZE INTERNAL TAXATION, ALTHOUGH SOME PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE RE COMPANY AND TURNOVER TAXES. A SINGLE TAX ON PERSONAL INCOME IS STILL UNDER STUDY.

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7. ONE OF THORNIEST DIFFICULTIES REMAINING, AHIDJO ADDED, IS INDUSTRIAL HARMONIZATION AMONG MEMBER STATES, A STILL UNFULFILLED UDEAC GOAL. HE NOTED THAT ESTABLISHMENT OF SMALL INDUSTRIES MAY CREATE SOME EMPLOYMENT BUT FREQUENTLY THIS MEANS GRANTING TAX BENEFITS WITHOUT DECISIVE BENEFIT EITHER TO COUNTRY OR CONSUMER. ONLY REGIONAL INDUSTRIALIZATION CAN CREATE SIGNIFICANT EXPORT INDUSTRIES, SECONDARY INDUSTRY, INCREASED RAW MATERIAL PROCESSING, AND MANUFACTURING DIVERSIFICATION. NEW TREATY PROVISIONS WILL ALLOW GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL INDUSTRIALIZATION. STUDY IS BEING UNDERTAKEN OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS, BELONGING PARTLY OR WHOLLY TO MEMBER STATES, TO MANUFACTURE FINISHED OR INTERMEDIATE PRODUCTS FOR UDEAC AND EXPORT MARKETS. AHIDJO ALSO SAID THAT TO ASSIST IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT MEMBER STATES WOULD COORDINATE DEVELOPMENT PLANS, PRELIMINAR STUDIES WOULD BE UNDERTAKEN FOR CREATING A REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCIAL BBDY, AND A JOINT DEVELOPMENT POLICY WILL BE DEVISED FOR AGRICULTURE. THERE WILL ALSO BE HARMONIZATION OF TRANSPORT, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND TOURISM EFFORTS.

8. OTHER THREE UDEAC PRESIDENTS MADE BRIEFER, ESSENTIALLY NONSUBSTANTIVE SPEECHES. ALSO ATTENDING THE DEC 8 CEREMONIES-- WHICH INCLUDED SPEECHMAKING AT MORNING OFFICIAL COMMEMORATION, AFTERNOON CORDINATED MOVEMENT DISPLAY BY SCHOOL CHILDREN AT STADIUM, AND EVENING FORMAL GALA BANQUET-- WAS PRESIDENT MACIAS OF NEIGHBORING EQUATORIAL GUINEA. PRES MOBUTU OF ZAIRE WAS INVITED AND INITIALLY EXPECTED TO ATTEND, BUT WAS OFF INSTEAD ON VISIT TO NORTH KOREA AND CHINA. PRES TOMBALBAYE OF CHAD, WHICH LEFT UDEAC IN 1968, WAS INVITED AND EXPECTED, BUT SENT LAST MINUTE MESSAGE THAT HE COULD NOT COME.BONGO, BOKASSA AND MACIAS ACCOMPANIED AHIDJO TO NGAOUNDERE FOR VARIOUS (NONUDEAC) CEREMONIES THERE DEC 10. NGOUABI, APPARENTLY
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UNEXPECTEDLY, RETURNED TO BRAZZAVILLE DEC 9 REPORTEDLY BECAUSE OF POLITICAL PROBLEMS THERE WITHIN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.
9. COMMENT. FINAL CHIEFS OF STATE COMMUNIQUE TYPICALLY HAD A LITTLE SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE BUT GAVE NO DETAILS ON EXACT REVISIONS MADE OR SOUGHT IN ORIGINAL 1964 TREATY. AHIDJOS SPEECH SOMEWHAT FLESHED OUT THE COMMUNIQUE AND MADE CLEAR THAT CAMEROONS INTERESTS LIE IN CHANGES THAT WILL BRING A MORE COORDINATED POLICY OF REGIONAL INDUSTRIALIZATION. EMBASSY POUCHING TEXTS OF COMMUNIQUE AND SPEECHES TO DEP (AF/C).
MOORE

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